

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

April 19, 2011

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 200-A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We are writing in support of Governor Beverly Perdue's request for an expedited Secretarial major disaster designation for counties in the State of North Carolina affected by the tornadoes, high winds, flooding, and severe storms on April 16, 2011. This designation will provide critical disaster assistance resources such as low-interest FSA emergency loans to eligible producers.

Additional counties may need to be added to the declaration as the Farm Service Agency (FSA) continues to assess production and physical losses suffered by producers.

As many farmers were beginning to plant their crops, multiple tornadoes tore through North Carolina. Tragically, 22 North Carolinians were killed and over 100 more people sustained serious injuries. More than 1,000 homes, farms and businesses were destroyed or damaged, which will cost millions of dollars to repair and rebuild. Many producers have lost equipment barns, silos and other agriculture buildings that are vital to their operations.

A large amount of debris has spread across the area, which will make it hard for farmers to access their fields to harvest or plant their crops on time. The harvest of the wheat crop, which is in its final growth stages, may be impacted by the debris in the fields and will require extra labor to remove. The heavy amount of rainfall is likely to delay the upcoming corn and cotton planting.

It is critical that North Carolina producers in the affected counties receive immediate assistance from USDA so that they can quickly and fully recover from this devastating storm. We stand ready to help in any way that we can. Thank you in advance for your prompt consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


Senator Richard Burr


Senator Kay Hagan



Representative David Price



Representative Mike McIntyre



Representative G.K. Butterfield



Representative Renee Ellmers



Representative Walter Jones



Representative Brad Miller



Representative Larry Kissell